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From the Office of the Director of Health

Medication Dispensing Exercise Simulates Public Health Emergency Response

As part of a state-sponsored regional exercise, the Springfield-Greene County Health Department and its partners will open two medication dispensing sites in Greene County on June 14, 2006. This exercise is a test of the health department's community mass prophylaxis plan which guides the distribution of medication or vaccinations to large numbers of people accurately and efficiently.

"Because we are such a mobile society today, we know that disease can spread very quickly from around the world to our community," says health department director Kevin Gipson. "This exercise will ensure that if an outbreak comes to our community we are able to efficiently protect our residents and ultimately save lives."

Central and Willard High Schools will be utilized as dispensing sites for this exercise. Summer school students will play the role of "patients" in need of preventative medications. Time study data and dispensing accuracy information will be collected from the exercise scenario and from the provided patient role information for analysis.

Each dispensing site requires a minimum of 60 workers to man the work stations. Health department staff and local Community Heroes volunteers will make up the majority of site workers. Individuals who would like to participate as a volunteer worker or as a "patient" should contact Rebecca Ray at (417) 874-1297.

"We used this same community medication dispensing plan to offer influenza vaccinations in October 2004," says health department director Kevin Gipson. "Plan implementation can be scaled up or down depending on the particular situation we are facing. The exercise will allow us to test and improve our plan in conjunction with community partners, the state health department, area hospitals and other local public health agencies in southwest Missouri."

For more information, contact:

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